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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Poland

SUBJECT General Conditions

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general conditions in Poland

Enclosure: 1 report (12 pages)

TO: State

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SCIENCE.

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The regime in Poland opposes all Scientific theories which go against marxist-leninist-stalinist doctrines. This concerns chiefly philosophy and those sciences related to it. For instance, the psychiatric handbook written by (Prof.)^X BILIKIEWICZ M.D., (of the Gdansk Academy of Medicine - Chair of Psychiatry) was forbidden to be published by the orders of the regime authorities. In biological studies the genetical theory of Morgan is opposed. A definitely pro-communist attitude has been taken up by, among others,

(Prof. Dr.)^X MARCHLEWSKI, rector of the Jagiellonian University in Krakow (biology);

(Prof.)^X PENSON, M.D., IIIrd chair of Internal Diseases, Medical Academy in Gdansk;

(Prof.)^X MAJEWSKA, M.D., professor (woman) of the Neurological Chair of the Gdansk Medical Academy.

LITERATURE.

Reading is widely encouraged. There has been created a close network of libraries and public reading-rooms, at work places (Trade Union) and bookshops of a fairly wide assortment of books, which are sold at low prices. Most widely read are revived editions of classics, translations of French, Scandinavian, German and Latvian authors. Of Polish authors the fairly popular ones are ~~XYGAT~~^{XYGAT} and ~~IGOR NEVERLY~~^{IGOR NEVERLY}. Books by Soviet authors such as EHRENBURG are fairly popular because of their high literary level, the liveliness of their language and

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their lack of shrieking propaganda. Interest in books with an obvious propaganda bias is negligible. Marxist literature is read only by those who are preparing for their student's examinations, students of Party Trade Union schools who are obliged to do so and declared opponents of communism who are looking for the counter arguments [redacted]

50X1-HUM

In the larger towns large technical bookshops are open separately, of which one in particular goes in for books from abroad, mainly Soviet, East German, Czech, Hungarian etc. handbooks. Lately the influx of German handbooks had to be stopped.

THEATRE REPERTOIRE.

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This is uninteresting [redacted] The majority of plays are flattering propaganda noise, which even the best cast could not bring to life. Classical pieces are put on but with a communist setting. Theatre tickets are mostly fairly expensive. There is small attendance, in spite of the fact that plays which are not communistic are beginning to be put back on the stage, or unless the cast is good and the acting impressive. Generally speaking [redacted] the theatre, as a cultural-educational factor, is dying. Sometimes attendances are artificially stimulated by trades Unions who either give away tickets to their members or put pressure on them to buy tickets on their pay day.

FILMS.

Are almost always Soviet ones, though Polish films are seen sometimes, or East German, Czech or Hungarian ones. The most interesting are the German and Hungarian ones. Western-European, English, Danish, French and Italian are very rarely shown (one or two per year). The subject matter of the Soviet satellite film is slight, and often coarse. The theme is almost always the

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It seems that Soviet films are to prepare public opinion for the future world.

THE PRESS.

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MASS MEETINGS, etc.

Attendance at mass meetings is extensive because no one likes to

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- 4 -

50X1-HUM

run unnecessary risks. People are generally antagonistic to and prejudiced against mass meetings so that the propaganda results are actually the reverse of what the organizers aim at. Mass meetings achieve merely an infinitesimal effect in intimidating people and awakening mutual distrust; a participant in the mass meeting may assume that the speaker has really altered his views and that one should be cautious in one's dealings with him.

POLISH YOUTH.

The attitude towards the regime of the majority of young people in Poland is negative. Reasons for their antagonism vary according to the age and the education of the young people. The following points should be taken into consideration in this connection:

1. Ideological reasons, arising from the young people's personal analysis of the situation or dictated by their family or environment;
2. Lack of organization which would ensure a way of life suited to their age and allow them to develop hobbies. Before the war this was done by the Polish Union of Boy Scouts and Girl Guides. The present-day "Red-Scouting" and Z. M. P. (Union of Polish Youth) are throttling the young by forcing them to undertake political work;
3. Lack of freedom (curtailment of the range of excursions, of marine sports, sight-seeing, etc.);
4. Their critical attitude towards the Marxist-Stalinist doctrine because it is dry, devoid of emotional elements, takes up a great deal of time and is enforced and rammed down their throats;
5. Their daily experience of life (poverty despite work, the general chaos, a slovenly army and militia, lofty-sounding slogans used to mislead the people, etc., etc.)

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survey-tables, etc. American scientific textbooks are trusted most, and then generally western-European ones. It is when these are lacking that students start hunting for Polish textbooks, and only buy a Russian one when in dire need. The price of textbooks is comparatively low. A good technical or medical textbook can be obtained for 15 - 20 zlotys. There is no control on the purchase of textbooks in bookshops or second-hand bookshops.

Whether a young person is a member of a political organization rarely proves that he or she holds pro-communist views, or pro-regime ones either. Most frequently membership of political parties is dictated by practical necessity (admission to schools or colleges, for scholarships, etc.) or the need to conceal a political past or actual political struggle, popularly known as "Busting the Party from inside" (rozsadzanie partji od wewnatrz).

It should be assumed that a large majority of Polish young people who are politically "active", regardless of their real political outlook, are now in the ranks of the PZPR, ZMP, ZHD and TPPR. When the communist system breaks down in Poland and the "activists" have eliminated from their midst those elements which have genuinely collaborated with communism, those who will remain, politically the most wide awake, and active group, will form the core of those who will rule Poland in the future.

I have given my comments concerning examinations, discipline of studies, recruitment, studies in the USSR and assignments to jobs in my report on Medical Studies. I can only add that those who are sent for studies to the USSR include pupils and graduates of intermediate schools. In the Gdansk area there is no vacancy for chemical students. The commission which decides about the admission of a candidate for academic studies takes into consideration first his social class origin, political opinion and the results of the examination in Marxism. The results of his examination in the subject of his chosen studies are wholly secondary in importance.

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7

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COMMERCE.

The highly developed commercial intelligence apparatus is engaged in the investigation of demand and supply, the regulation of prices, etc. Wholesale trade is run on the principle of cash-less turnover. Retail trade, with a very few exceptions is wholly in the hands of the state. In all larger towns the government has created ^{department} ~~multiple~~ stores (domy towarowe). The assortment of goods in these ^{department} ~~multiple~~ stores does not generally vary from the assortment in specialised state shops. Occasionally, however, a ^{dept.} ~~multiple~~ store is granted an allocation of some goods which are lacking elsewhere, or have this article in better quality and at a lower price. The aim, probably, is to convince the population that the ^{dept.} ~~multiple~~ stores are the best supplied.

The managers of the state-owned [] shops must deposit the cash obtained from sales every day in the bank, or every other day. The manager of each shop, after closing down for the day, gives his key into the custody of a special regional employee (pracownik rejonowy). The keys are brought from the central key storage immediately before work begins. Apart from the individual concerned no one is to know the location of the key storage. [] ^{50X1-HUM} two such key storage places; one, for shops in Nowy Port, is attached to the bakery in Plac Wolnosci (drawing No.1.) and the other key storage for shops in Oliwa is located near the park on the road leading to Gdynia.

HARD SURFACED ROADS.

Road administration authorities were re-organized in 1951/52 and voivodate Road Offices (dyrekcje) were then created, which are independent of the Voivodate National Councils. They correspond more or less to the pre-war Public Works Regional Offices (Byrekcje Robot Publicznych). Road offices (dyrekcje) have their own traffic bases for vehicles and road machinery (for the

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most part American) and their own experimental and research stations - laboratories. As compared with 1939 the condition of roads in Poland now is much better and renders mass transport possible.

RECONSTRUCTION WORK.

Was officially completed together with the Three-Year Plan. In practice it is being continued both as regards urbanisation and industrial building.. Chief stress is laid on the reconstruction of heavy industries. As a rule re-building activities are carried out wherever the core of a production plant has not been destroyed (e.g. the reconstruction of HOLM as part of the surviving Gdansk and Northern Shipyards.) Old brick obtained from dismantling is used partly for reconstruction work. There are regulations controlling the proportion of old bricks to new in any building work.

HOUSING BUILDING.

This has been relegated to second place (after the erection of industrial and administration buildings). Entirely new workers' settlements have been put up in the vicinity of []

[] Krakow - GRZEGORZKI, Gdansk -
UL ROOSEVELTA and UL DLUGA. [] New Students' Hostels are put up
in the vicinity of colleges, etc., (Krakow - UL REYMONTA, Gdansk
- UL MORSKA.)

Housing is allocated as a rule to the employees of a basic establishment or school in the grounds of that establishment or school. Priority in workers' housing allocations (przydzialy mieszkam pracowniczych) is given, in the first place, to shock workers (not so much to Party members for propaganda reasons). Despite faulty building due to hurry and the frequent use of raw or inferior building materials, housing conditions are on the

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- 9 -
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whole good. Housing building is very inadequate as compared with the demand, especially as the possibility of using old houses (both privately owned and state administered) are slowly decreasing. Practically no privately-owned housing premises are being built. There are numbers of privately-owned buildings erected and in a completely "raw" state, which cannot be completed and fitted out as much from lack of funds as from the difficulties of obtaining permission to secure building materials needed [] 50X1-HUM

AGRICULTURE.

In accordance with the ideas of the Six-Year Plan the system universally adopted by agriculture in Poland is to be that of production co-operatives (of three types). [] 50X1-HUM

[] a number of kolkhozes in Poland are subsidized by the state. The purpose of the subsidies is to create by artificial means such attractive conditions of work as would encourage the peasants to join the kolkhozes. Various facilities are opened to them with this end in view, for example, medical care is thrown open to members of a kolkhoze. Permanent medical teams are organized, to visit the co-ops and [] 50X1-HUM [] landed estates (P.G.R.) regularly. The work itself is to be made easier by agricultural machinery. In addition to encouraging the peasants to join the kolkhozes, the regime is exerting economic pressure on them to force them to do so. This pressure is applied by the imposition of incommensurately high taxes and quotas and by creating difficulties in the supplies of individual farmers. In present conditions a peasant works on his own farm, often without any profit, exhausting his cash reserves (for example dollars sent by his family abroad) and any income gained outside his farm (e.g. additional work in industry, etc.,) is sunk in it. Should such a state of affairs continue one may assume that by, say, 1955, all individual farms will have been

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liquidated, and their owners forced either to join the kolkhozes or abandon their land and take up some other occupation.

At the moment the resistance of peasants owning their own land is still strong. Those peasants, on the other hand, who are running farms on land given them by the state (agricultural reform and the allocation of ex-German farms) join the collective farms without much resistance.

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After a period of comparatively good prospects in 1946 - 48 the peasants found out that the land reform had only been a ruse on the part of the regime and that the "good times" (when they could purchase farms at half-price or simply high-handedly move into abandoned ex-German farms) came very soon to an end.

The communists exert little genuine influence on the villages. The political "atmosphere" of a village depends on the financial position of the average inhabitant. In villages where most of the inhabitants are indigent, or where there are blatant differences in wealth, the communist influence is great. In villages where the majority own a moderate farm (sredniacy) the resistance is very strong. The resistance of the peasants is psychological. It is largely based on the peasant's traditional mistrust of the townsman and especially of the kind of man who owns nothing and yet tries to "teach the farmer".

In addition, a powerful anti-communist factor in the villages is to be found in the Roman Catholic church. Antagonism towards the regime is increasing because of the incredible exploitation of the peasant by taxation, quotas, compulsory deliveries and controlled prices for industrial goods.

The Campaign launched for the "unification of the town with the countryside" (akcja łączności miasta ze wsią) by various

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11

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propaganda teams of political agitators []

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achieves the opposite of what they aim at (the peasants making fun of them and feeling that the regime is trying to court them).

Serious danger threatens the rural community from men returning from military service and from the SP organizations. Some of these, having tested the easier kind of life in towns are unable to go back to the old village communities. They eventually turn into what is known as "mędrzec-lazik" a sort of would-be clever tramp who can be and is used by the regime for police and propaganda jobs.

The ties of the rural communities with the Roman Catholic church are very strong and recall pre-war conditions. Owing to the extensive prestige of the clergy and the simultaneous backwardness of the countryside the "patriot priests" operating in the villages might cause a great deal of harm.

When thinking about the future peasants are likely to bank on [] the Polish Socialist Party (PSL, i.e. the secret PSL leaders in Poland) []

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Key to Sketch No.1.

NOWY PORT

1. Road leading from Gdansk to Nowy Port
2. Crossing over railway tracks
3. "Island" in Plac Wolnosci
4. Tramway stop shelter
5. Newspaper Kiosk
6. ul. Wolnosci
7. Bakery. Behind it is located the Key storage. It is serviced by a young woman employee.
8. ul. Lowczynskiego (formerly ul. Parafialna).

Key to Sketch No.2.

OLIWA

1. The road from WRESZCZ-OLIWA to SOPOT-GDYNIA
2. Tramway round-about (loop)
3. Oliwa Park
4. Road leading to Railway station
5. Key Storage. Located in an old building, probably a former shop. It is entered direct from the street, up two or three steps. It is serviced by an old man.

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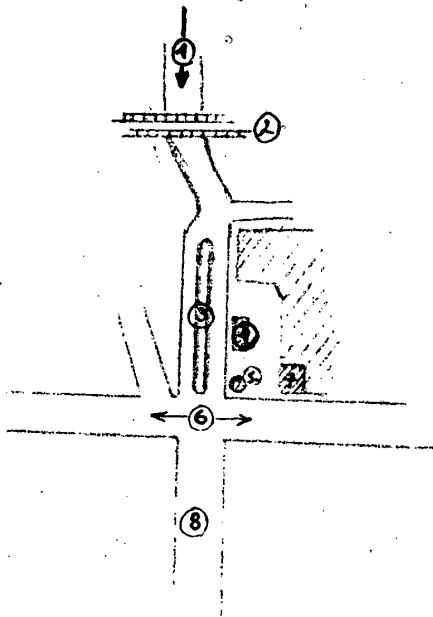
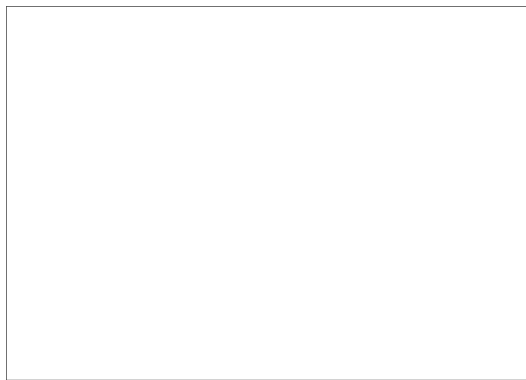


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RYS. 1

NOVY PORT



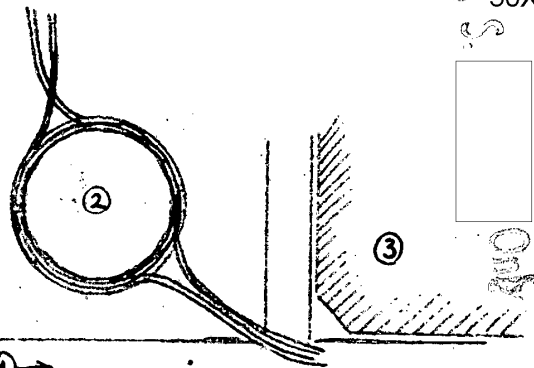
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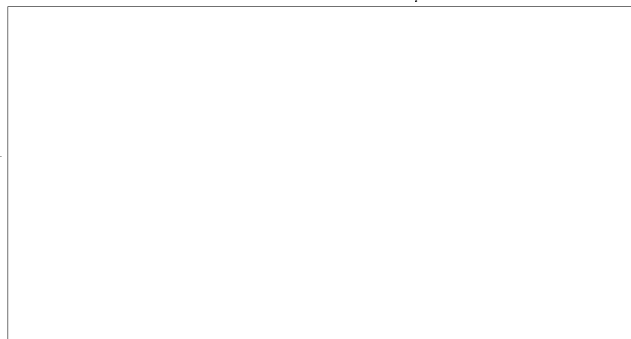


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RYS. 2



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